President U Thein Sein receives ASEAN economic ministers and ASEAN Secretary-General

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Feb—President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein received ASEAN economic ministers—Senior Minister & Minister of Commerce Mr Cham Prasidh of Cambodia, Second Minister of Foreign & Trade Phoe Khyin Dato Lim Jock Seng of Brunei Darussalam, Minister of Trade Mr Gita Irwan Wijayawan of Indonesia, Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr Nam Viyaketh of Laos, Minister of International Trade and Industry Dato’ Sri Mustapa Mohamed of Malaysia, Secretary of Department of Trade and Industry Mr Gregory L Domingo of the Philippines, Minister of Trade and Industry Mr Lim Hng Kiang of Singapore, Minister of Commerce Mr Boonsong Teriyapirom of Thailand, and Minister of Industry and Trade Mr Vu Huy Hoang of Vietnam—and ASEAN Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace here at 1.30 pm.

Also present at the call together with President U Thein Sein were Union Minister for Home Affairs Lt-Gen Ko Ko, Union Minister at President Office U Soe Maung, Union Minister for National Planning and Economic Development U Tin Naing Thein, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr Myo Myint and departmental heads.

Promotion of economic ties among ASEAN member countries was discussed at the meeting.

President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar U Thein Sein poses for a documentary photo together with ASEAN economic ministers and the ASEAN Secretary-General.—MNA

Information Ministry to assist in printing & publication in Mandalay

ASEAN Economic Ministers’ 18th informal meeting held

Sittoung River Crossing Bridge (Moppalin) that brings about better transport and smooth commodity flow
Green Tourism

Economic activity can be divided into two categories, goods and services in other words manufacturing industry and service industry. But, there is an industry that economies large or small can go into—tourism or smokeless industry. It is a cash cow industry and has become the core industry of some countries in recent years.

Some tourist destinations for example like Dubai and Singapore use man-made facilities to attract tourists whereas the scenic beauty is major tourist attraction in some countries. Myanmar belongs to the latter.

There are so many disadvantages of being a less-developed country but one of its advantages, maybe the only, is that it can develop ecotourism which industrialized nations find it difficult due to urbanization. From silvery snow-capped mountains in the north to breathtaking natural beaches in the south, from green and lust tea plantations in the east to blush Rakinkle mountain ranges in the west, Myanmar is full of tourist attractions like Bagun, the archaeological showcase in its heart. There is no reason we do not want to use these picturesque sites to improve our economy. And in fact, it is more environmentally and financially beneficial than mining and logging in the long run.

Ecotourism is second to none to enjoy the nature. It not only generates income but also contributes to ecological sustainability. It is also a smart move to initiate green economy. Recent political reforms have put Myanmar on the radar screen, which is expected to bring a large number of tourists into the country. The influx of tourists is economically good but at the same time, we should be aware of its adverse environmental and social impact on the region.

It would be very grateful to international government and non-government actors if they would assist Myanmar in introducing environmental tourism. It is not only helping us but also saving our own planet.
US Ambassador says India and China both vital for US

GUWAHATI, 26 Feb—US Ambassador to India Peter Burleigh today said America was maintaining friendly ties with both India and China, which were growing economies and vital for the US. “Indo-US ties are at not at the expense of Indo-China ties. It is not a matter of either-or,” Mr Burleigh told reporters here during the inauguration of an American Corner here. Replying to a query if India’s closer ties with the US were taking it away from China, he said India had itself made it clear that it would maintain its relations with both countries. For the US, both India and China were equally important, Mr Burleigh added. “These three (US, China and India) are major economies of the world and all these three are very important,” he said.

The US Ambassador was on a six-day visit to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, which will conclude tomorrow.—INTERNET

Himalayan Sherpas lament climate change devastation

KATHMANDU, 26 Feb—Climate change is altering the face of the Himalayas, devastating farming communities and making Mount Everest increasingly treacherous to climb, some of the world’s top mountainers have warned. Apa Sherpa, the Nepali climber who has conquered Mount Everest a record 21 times, said he was disturbed by the lack of snow on the world’s highest peak, caused by rising temperatures.

“In 1989 when I first climbed Everest there was a lot of snow and ice but now most of it has just become bare rock. That, as a result, is causing more rockfalls which is a danger to the climbers,” he told AFP.

“Also, climbing is becoming more difficult because when you are on a mountain you can wear crampons but it’s very dangerous and very slippery to walk on bare rock with crampons.”

Speaking after completing the first third of a gruelling 1,700-kilometre (1,100-mile) trek across the Himalayas, Apa Sherpa would not rule out the possibility of Everest being unclimbable in the coming years.

“What will happen in the future I cannot say but this much I can say from my own experiences — it has changed a lot,” he said an an interview with AFP in the village of Gati, 16 kilometres from Nepal’s border with Tibet.

The 51-year-old father-of-three, dubbed “Super Sherpa”, began his working life as a farmer but turned to the tourism industry and mountaineering after he lost all his possessions when a glacial lake burst in 1985.

He is on a 120-day walk dubbed the Climate Smart Celebrity Trek with another of the world’s top climbers, Nepali Dawa Steven Sherpa, with the pair expected to reach the finish on 13 May.

India Indian police seize guns from Italian ship

NEW DELHI, 26 Feb—Indian police on Sunday seized machine guns alleged to have been used by soldiers on an Italian oil tanker to shoot two fishermen who were mistaken for pirates. The guns were removed from the Italian-flagged oil tanker Enrica Lexie, which has been docked in Cochin port in southern India since the final shootings on February 15.

Two Italian soldiers, deployed on the vessel to guard against the growing threat from armed pirates across the Indian Ocean, have been arrested on murder charges and are being held in custody. Diplomatic tensions have been high since the deaths, with Indian authorities saying the shootings occurred in international waters and the soldiers have immunity from Indian law.

Indian police, witnessed by 10 Italian government officers, began a 14-hour search of the oil tanker on Saturday and took the arms off early on Sunday. “We have seized four boxes from the ship. They contain two Italian-made light machine guns and other weapons,” a senior Indian police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity.—INTERNET

A strike on Iran would pose tough test for Israel

TEL AVIV, 26 Feb—An Israeli pre-emptive strike on Iran’s nuclear sites would amount to a roll of the dice against elusive targets, drawing in the United States if the gamble fell short, analysts and former US military officers say.

Iran’s air defences and ageing fighters would be no match for Israel’s high-tech aircraft and cyber warfare, but the outcome of a raid would largely hinge on intelligence and whether Teheran is able to hide key elements of its uranium enrichment network.

Israel’s military has earned a reputation for lightning assaults that blindside their enemies, but the Iranian nuclear programme presents a much more complicated task for Israel compared to previous raids that took out reactors in Iraq and Syria.

In 1981, Israeli fighters destroyed an Iraqi atomic reactor in Osirak without losing a plane and in 2007 the Israelis are widely believed to have knocked out a clandestine reactor in Syria.

But flying fighter jets 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles) all the way to Iran would stretch Israel’s limited supply of aerial refuelling points.

US drone crashes in NW Pakistan

ISLAMABAD, 26 Feb—A US drone crashed in northwest Pakistan’s tribal district near the Afghan border late Saturday, officials said. The unmanned reconnaisance aircraft came down in the mountainous Machikhel area about 30 kilometres (20 miles) east of Miranshah, the main town in North Waziristan region, which is frequently targeted by drone strikes against Taleban and Al-Qaeda militants, military and security officials said.

“A US drone crashed, apparently due to some technical fault,” a military official in the northwestern city of Peshawar told AFP.

Security officials in the region confirmed the crash saying it fell in the mountains.

The crash site has been surrounded by militants, one security official said, refusing to confirm claims by some Taleban that the drone was shot down by militants.

Militants had taken away parts of the wreckage, a security official said.—INTERNET

US skeptical on Iran nuclear programme

WASHINGTON, 26 Feb—US intelligence agencies continue to believe Iran has not made a decision to build a nuclear warhead.

James R Clapper Jr, director of national intelligence, summarized that view in Senate testimony on 31 Jan, The New York Times reported. Officials say Iran has made considerable progress in enriching uranium, the toughest part of building a bomb, but appears to have taken no steps towards constructing a warhead.

“They are certainly moving on that path, but we don’t believe they have actually made the decision to go ahead with a nuclear weapon,” Clapper told the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

The Iranian government has consistently said its enrichment programme is only for nuclear power.

European and Israeli agencies disagree with the US assessment, arguing either Iran has resumed its nuclear weapons programme or never completely abandoned it in 2003 as the United States believes.

Some US officials believe Iran’s goal, at least for now, is not a nuclear weapons programme. Instead, they say Iran is trying to create uncertainty — “strategic ambiguity” — about whether it has nuclear capability.

Britain “temporarily withdraws” civilian personnel from Kabul

LONDON, 26 Feb—Following deadly shooting of two American NATO officers in Afghan interior ministry on Saturday, Britain has taken precautionary measures to protect its personnel in Kabul.

“Britain has temporarily withdrawn civilian members and advisers from institutions within Kabul. We will keep the situation under review,” a spokesman for British Foreign and Commonwealth Office told Xinhua.

The foreign office declined to say when they would go back to work.—Xinhua

A Tibetan farmer watches over about 100 sheep on the banks of Yumdrok-So lake surrounded by the high peaks of the Himalayas in 2007.—INTERNET

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Gene might be a culprit in sudden infant death for boys

HANOVER, 26 Feb.—Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) may sometimes have a genetic component, a team of German researchers reports.

DNA analysis from a small group of infants who succumbed to SIDS revealed that many of the male children carried a particular enzyme mutation that may have impaired their ability to breathe properly. This was not the case for female SIDS patients.

Study author Dr. Michael Klintschar, director of the Institute for Legal Medicine at Medical University Hannover in Germany, said his team tried to build upon previous research suggesting that “abnormalities in the brain stem, the part of the brain that regulates breathing and other basic functions, lead to SIDS.”

“The reasons for these abnormalities are unclear,” he noted, “but some scientists believe that the genes inherited by the parents might be one of several factors.”

Klintschar and his colleagues found indications that SIDS risk might be higher among male infants who carry a mutation of an enzyme—called MAOA—that appears to impede key neurotransmitter function.

“Babies that have this variant inherited might have an impaired breathing regulation,” he said.

“But the risk conveyed by this gene variant is relatively small compared to other factors, like sleeping position or exposure to smoking.”

Moreover, the findings have to be replicated in another population sample. The study appears online and in the March issue of Pediatrics.

Miracle diet pill? A safe drug is elusive

WASHINGTON, 25 Feb.—The battle of the bulge has been a big, fat failure for US drugmakers. But that hasn’t stopped them from trying. For nearly a century, scientists have struggled to make a diet pill that helps people lose weight without side effects that range from embarrassing digestive issues to dangerous heart problems.

Earlier this week, a government panel recommended the FDA approve the latest diet drug Qnexa. The recommendation raises hopes that the US could approve the first anti-obesity drug in more than a decade. It also highlights how challenging it is to create a pill that fights fat in a variety of people without negative side effects. Even Xenqua was previously rejected over concerns that it can cause heart palpitations and birth defects if taken by pregnant women.

“Having a drug for obesity would be like telling me you had a drug for the fever,” said Dr. Mitchell Roslin, chief of bariatric surgery at Northern Westchester Hospital in New York. “There can be millions of different reasons why someone is obese; it’s really a symptom of various underlying mechanisms.”

An effective and safe diet pill would be an easy sale in the US: With more than 75 million obese adults, the nation’s obesity rate is nearing 35 percent. But the biggest problem in creating a weight-loss drug is that there appears to be no safe way to turn off one of the human body’s most fundamental functions. For millions of years, humans have been programmed to consume calories and store them as energy, or fat.

Brain calls the shots on which hand holds cellphone

FILE Photos show GlaxoSmithKline’s alli, the first over-the-counter diet pill approved by the Food and Drug Administration, in New York.

Scotiabank says not “systemically important” to Canada

MEXICO CITY, 26 Feb.—The head of Bank of Nova Scotia suggested on Friday that Canada’s third-largest bank should be exempt from tougher global regulations that will eventually be imposed on banks considered “systemically important” domestically.

Chief Executive Rick Waugh cited his company’s strong leverage on operations outside Canada as evidence that it is set apart in the handful of banks that dominate in Canada, and could make it exempt from extra regulatory scrutiny.

Leaders from the Group of 20 advanced and emerging countries have already agreed to impose a capital surcharge on the world’s biggest banks as part of a broader regulatory push aimed at preventing global financial crises and taxpayer-funded bailouts.

Now they are turning their sights to so-called domestic SIFIs, or systemically important financial institutions, banks deemed big enough to cause harm to their country’s financial system should they run into trouble. The Financial Stability Board, the G20’s regulatory task force, has said it would complete work on this framework by the end of this year. Although no criteria have been set for deciding which banks would be targeted. Waugh said Canada’s big banks should not all be treated the same.

Scotiabank, which operates in 41 countries, is one of the world’s most geographically diverse banks. The lender’s exposure to Latin American markets, where it has a 30 percent market share, is growing.

“Having said that, we are not seeing a lot of changes in the number of investments or new business going on in the bank,” said Fernando Rego, chief executive of Scotiabank’s Canadian operations.

He also said the company was not seeing a significant decrease in revenues from Latin America.

Battle lines forming between MF Global customers, hedge funds

NEW YORK, 26 Feb.—The MF Global saga could soon become a legal battle between hedge funds and the futures brokerage’s shorn-rich customers, who may face more than a billion dollars at stake. As the investigation into the collapse of the Jon Corzine-led brokerage moves into more of a regulatory whodunit than a criminal case, the guessing game centers on who the two court-appointed trustees overseeing MF Global’s liquidation will sue to recoup money owed to customers of MF’s broker-dealer unit and creditors of its parent.

Those decisions are not easy ones, legal experts say, and they could end up pitting hedge funds like Appaloosa Management and Paul Singer’s Elliott Management—who own MF Global bonds—against brokerage customers trying to recover an estimated $1.6 billion shortfall in their accounts. It’s likely that James Giddens, the trustee in charge of recovering customer funds, and Louis Freeh, the trustee in charge of recovering money for parent creditors, will dispute the ownership of certain assets, said attorney Chris Ward, vice chair of Polsinelli Shughart’s bankruptcy practice, who is not involved in the case.

EU says eurozone economy to shrink in 2012

BRUSSELS, 26 Feb.—The European Commission has predicted that the eurozone economy will contract by 0.3% in 2012. In its previous forecast in November, it said the economy would grow by 0.1%.

The unexpected stalling of the recovery in late 2011 is set to extend into the first two quarters of 2012, the Commission said. But it added that the 17-nation bloc would only have a “mild” recession and that it saw signs of stabilisation.

The Commission predicted that the economy of the wider 27-nation EU would be unchanged in 2012. The biggest drag on the eurozone economy is expected to be Greece, which is now expected to see a 4.4% decline in output in the current year.
Shark fin soup comes with side of toxins

MIAMI, 26 Feb — The destruction of sharks for shark fin soup has helped put many wild species of the fish on the road to extinction. Though you probably didn’t need scientific research to tell you this, a new study shows that fear of job loss causes workers to feel dissatisfied and less committed to their jobs. The study also shows that blue-collar and white-collar workers react differently to job insecurity.

The research, which polled more than 300 workers in Spain and was conducted by the psychology department at the University of Valencia, shows that insecurity at work is directly and negatively linked to satisfaction in work and life and also affects performance and commitment. Furthermore, the research reveals that the consequences of this insecurity differ in accordance with the occupational group they work in.

Steve Jobs birthday wishes fly on Twitter

NEW YORK, 26 Feb — Steve Jobs was abuzz on Friday with loving words for the late Apple co-founder’s 57th birthday. “Happy birthday Steve Jobs,” read a post from Apple-centric blog Cult of the Mac. “The whole world misses you.” Jobs’ birthday was among the top five trends at Twitter.

Facebook says those numbers are a drop in the ocean compared to the optimistic outlook of the past few years. In 2010, 50 percent of Facebook’s monthly active users were gamers; gazing down virtual capos, and spamming friends’ feeds with brown cows. 2011 halved that number, with Facebook reaching 800 million active users last month, and is projected to hit the 1 billion mark by late summer of 2012.

UK submarine data de-classified to aid climate science

A man reads a biography of Apple co-founder Steve Jobs in 2011. Twitter was abuzz with loving words for Steve Jobs on what would have been the late Apple co-founder’s 57th birthday.— Internet

London, 26 Feb — The UK Ministry of Defence is to de-classify submarine data to help shed light on climate change in the Arctic.

Environmental data are routinely monitored by submarines, but the measurements are highly sensitive because they could give away positions. A dataset from one submarine mission will be released to give a snapshot of conditions under the ice. It is hoped that further data could be released in future, yielding clues to how the Arctic is changing. Water temperature and salt content are among the environmental data monitored by submarines. But only a handful of people have access to such information because they could be used to track where UK submarines go.

As part of the Submarine Estimates of Arctic Turbulence Spectra (SEATS) project, the MoD will release measurements to researchers at the National Oceanography Centre in Southport.

Fear of losing jobs, affects employee performance

VALENCIA, 26 Feb — While Facebook casual gaming has helped to triple the number of gamers in the US in the past three years, new research is saying that the social gaming boom is beginning to calm down, and perhaps seeking to mature. Market research firm IHS iSuppli states that “the honeymoon’s over,” chiefly due to rising barriers to entry, increasing competition and the fact that gaming has fallen in priority in social media users.

The IHS iSuppli report points out that 2011 marked a sharp drop in Facebook gaming, compared to the 12 percent growth in the previous years. In 2010, 50 percent of Facebook’s monthly active users were gamers; gazing down virtual capos, and spamming friends’ feeds with brown cows, 2011 halved that number, with Facebook blacklisting top gamers dropping down to 25 percent. Meanwhile, Facebook user growth has continued to climb. The social media giant reached 800 million active users last month, and is projected to hit the 1 billion mark by late summer of 2012.

The study uses the social gaming leader to illustrate the point. Facebook’s gaming poster child, Zynga, which makes up 12 percent of the networking site’s revenue, declined in user growth this quarter, compared to the optimistic outlook of the past few years.

Watch a helicopter get destroyed by physics without even leaving the ground

NEW YORK, 26 Feb — It was the most stunning helicopter accident Para, Brazil has ever seen. And it all happened without the helicopter even leaving the ground. The shocking destruction of the plane was caused by a phenomenon called ground resonance. Like an out-of-balance washing machine, the plane starts shaking more and more violently until the force tears it in half. Though the destruction was pretty epic, no one was hurt in the accident. They’re probably going to need to buy a new helicopter, though.

Apple Germany disables push email service

Berlin, 26 Feb — Apple says it has disabled the push email function for its mobile devices in Germany in an ongoing patent dispute with rival Motorola. Apple Inc said on Friday that the restrictions are in effect for all push services, but the device to refresh its email, will affect customers using MobileMe and iCloud email accounts.

Apple says those customers can still receive email from other services. A Mannheim court ruled earlier this month that Apple had infringed upon a Motorola patent on push email technology. Apple says it believes its patent is valid and is appealing the decision. The court said it was necessary to promote prominence as gaming platform in 2009 and 2010,” said HSS, senior game analyst, Steve Bailey. However, with equal speed, the market then settled into a state of maturity in 2011, with conditions equal speed, the market then settled into a state of maturity.
Fire at Brazil’s Antarctic base kills two navy personnel

LONDON, 26 Feb — The Russian Army will get its first Boomerang armored personnel carriers in 2013, a top military official has said.

The source further revealed that when the Dassault executive returned to a self-service ticket machine after helping his colleague his briefcase had disappeared. “His attention had been purposefully diverted. It was not a random theft. We have to determine whether the thieves were targeting confidential documents on the drone project or other valuables in the briefcase,” the source said. The person who hassled the woman almost immediately, and has not been seen since.

In this photo released by Armada de Chile, fire and smoke rise from Brazil’s Comandante Ferraz station in Antarctic peninsula, on 25 Feb, 2012. In an emailed statement, the Brazilian navy said the fire broke out Saturday morning in the machine room that houses the energy generators of the station where one man suffered non-life threatening injuries, and at least two people were reportedly missing. — Xinhua

LONDON, 26 Feb — Top secret documents, which contained classified information related to British drones, were stolen by two men at the Gare du Nord station in Paris.

A high-level executive working for French company Dassault Aviation was on his way to London on the Euro star train on 2nd February when the theft happened. According to Paris Judicial Police, the unnamed man briefly left his case unattended after his female colleague was harassed by a stranger, The Telegraph reported.

The documents in the case were marked ‘Defence Confidential’ and contained details of a joint Franco-British drone, a legal source close to the case revealed.

The source said that the theft happened at around 5pm, when the station was packed with cross-Channel travellers. The source further revealed that when the Dassault executive returned to a self-service ticket machine after helping his colleague his briefcase had disappeared. “His attention had been purposefully diverted. It was not a random theft. We have to determine whether the thieves were targeting confidential documents on the drone project or other valuables in the briefcase,” the source said. The person who hassled the woman almost immediately, and has not been seen since. — Xinhua

Workers pour concrete on the top of the 170-meter-high main tower of the Jiaozhou-Shaoshan (Jiaoshou) Bridge on the Hangzhou Bay, east China’s Zhejiang Province, on 22 Feb, 2012. As the second cross-sea bridge spanning across the Hangzhou Bay, the Jiaoshou Bridge is expected to enter operation by the end of 2012. It will halve the travel time down to 1.5 hours between Shaoshan in Zhejiang AND east China’s Shanghai. — Xinhua

Bees gather nectar on cole flowers in Luoping County, southwest China’s Yunnan Province, on 23 Feb, 2012. — Xinhua

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5.0 magnitude earthquake jolts Taipei’s Pingtung

BEIJING, 26 Feb — A 5.0 magnitude earthquake hit Taiwan’s Pingtung at 10:34 Beijing Time (02:34 GMT) on Sunday, said the China earthquake network centre (CENC).

The epicentre was monitored at 22.8 degrees north latitude and 120.8 degrees east longitude with a depth of 20 kilometres, according to the CENC.

Taipei’s meteorological authorities said the epicentre of the quake, measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale, was 30.4 km northeast of Pingtung County.

The quake was followed by two tremors, measuring 4.0 magnitude and 4.2 magnitude respectively, in a few minutes, according to the meteorological authorities. The quakes could be felt in Taipei. No casualties have been reported so far. — Xinhua

Fire at Brazil’s Antarctic base kills two navy personnel

RIO DE JANEIRO, 26 Feb — A fire killed two Brazilian navy personnel and injured a third one at the country’s Antarctic research base on Saturday, the navy said.

Fire broke out in a room housing energy generators and spread to other areas of the Comandante Ferraz station in Antarctica, 2012. In an emailed statement, the Brazilian navy said the fire broke out Saturday morning in the machine room that houses the energy generators of the station where one man suffered non-life threatening injuries, and at least two people were reportedly missing.

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Salient points of the bridge

1. The main bridge is 1365 feet long with the 244.1 feet long approach structure on Kyaikto side and the 783.6 feet long approach structure on Waw side. The total length of the bridge is 2392.7 feet.
2. The main bridge is of steel truss type while the approach structures are of reinforced concrete type.
3. It is facilitated with 20 feet wide motorroad flanked by two six feet wide pedestrian lanes on either side.
4. It can withstand 60 tons of loads.
5. The construction of the bridge started on 26-1-2005 and it was opened on 12-7-2008.

* The bridge was built to link Kyaikto Township in Thaton District, Mon State and Waw Township in Bago District, Bago Region.
* As the old Sittoung Bridge is in bad shape, it is not suitable for heavy loaded trucks to pass on it.
* Therefore, the old bridge was replaced with the new one that can withstand 60 tons of loads, thereby contributing to swift and smooth commodity flow.
* Thanks to the bridge, social undertakings that are crucial for economic development of Mon State can be carried out in a comfortable manner.

NAY PYI TAW, 26 Feb—Deputy Minister for Cooperatives U Than Tun on 22 February morning made an inspection tour of Rakhine State.

During his tour, he observed process of disbursing loans to members of Kyauktaw Myoma Market Cooperative Association Limited and left necessary instructions before he looked around the shops inside.

And, the deputy minister met with members of agricultural production cooperative association limited at the primary school in Daungtaw Yo Village.

He, then, held a meeting with township administrators, township level officials concerned, staff officers of township cooperative department, staff and members of cooperative association at the township general administrator’ office in Minbya.

MNA

OTTAWA, 26 Feb—A snow storm in eastern Canada caused major traffic problems in Ontario and Quebec, where police reported hundreds of collisions. A second storm prompted Environment Canada to issue warnings in western and central Canada, CBC News reported Friday. No serious injuries were reported in any of the collisions, police said.

A number of flights at airports in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal were either delayed or canceled, air port officials said. The storm hit Montreal Friday afternoon and was expected to bring 6-7 inches of snow, while eastern Quebec could see up to a foot of snow before the storm moves further east.

Blizzard conditions were forecast into Saturday in parts of New Brunswick, CBC News said. Environment Canada issued a watch for most of southern Saskatchewan as a second storm moved east and could drop 6-7 inches of snow through the day Saturday.

Parts of British Columbia were under an avalanche warning through Monday, CBC News said.

* Winter storms stretch across Canada

* Dy Cooperatives Minister calls for doing more cooperative tasks in Kyauktaw, Minbya

MNA

* Sittoung River Crossing Bridge (Moppalin) that brings about better transport and smooth commodity flow

Translation: TLA
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker visits Temple of Heaven Park

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann, accompanied by Deputy General Secretary of the National People’s Congress of the People’s Republic of China Mr Cao Wei Zhou visited Temple of Heaven Park in Beijing on 23 February. They viewed Chinese temple, historical buildings and systematic conservation of pine trees in advanced age. The Myanmar delegation then together with Mr Cao Wei Zhou posed for documentary photo in front of the temple. The delegation then proceeded to Myanmar Embassy to meet Myanmar ambassador U Tin Oo and wife, Military Attaché Col Tint Wai and wife, staff and their families of the embassy and the military attaché’s office and overseas Myanmar students.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker said Myanmar and China were close neighbours sharing the long borders and the bilateral relations had entered into strategic partnership.

He said that they came there to focus on matters of mutual concern despite the fact that Pyidaungsu Hluttaw was now in session in Myanmar. He urged them to accomplish their duties in unison, saying that the nation had certain improvement in international relations, economy and internal peace following the political stability. Next, the ambassador and wife hosted luncheon to the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and delegation members. After the luncheon, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker cordially greeted embassy staff and overseas students. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker enquired after the overseas students and urged them to study hard to apply what they were learning in practical field in the interests of the nation and its people. He also presented cash assistance to them.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker holds talks with PRC National People’s Congress Vice-Chairman

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann held discussion with Vice-Chairman Mr Lu Kongxiang of the PRC National People’s Congress at the National People’s Congress Convention Centre in Beijing on 24 February noon.

Those from Myanmar side at the meeting were chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw committees U Thein Zaw, U Hla Myint Oo, Thura U Aung Ko, U Maung Maung Swe and U Kyi Min, Region Hluttaw speakers U Sein Tin Win and U Hsan Hsint, Pyithu Hluttaw representatives and Myanmar Ambassador U Tin Oo and from Chinese side were Deputy Secretary General of the National People’s Congress Mr Cao Wei Zhou, members of National Races Affairs Committee Mr Luo Song Ling and Mr Zhi Duo Jie, member of Legal Affairs Committee Mr Fan Fang Ping, member of Finance and Taxation Mr He Xiao Wei and member of Education, Science and Culture Committee Mr Wu Zhong Ze.

The NPC Vice-Chairman extended warm welcome to the Myanmar delegation and said that the Myanmar delegation comprises high-ranking officials which reflect Myanmar’s consideration for China and it is also greatly beneficial to the two nations. China and Myanmar have established deep amicable relationship from time immemorial and it needs to maintain that relationship based on five principles of peaceful co-existence. Peace, development, and cooperation etc are main factors in every global nation. It is pleased to see Myanmar going on right track and it is a welcoming move also. Peace and stability is fundamental factor in building a nation. It needs a certain system to ensure peace and stability and public development. The NPC makes the final decisions for matters of serious concern in China. In recent years, the two nations have witnessed growing sector-wise cooperation. It is assumed that increased bilateral cooperation promotes the comprehensive strategic partnership of the two countries. It needs to cooperate further in legislation and other sectors between the two parliaments. It is believed that Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker would play a leading role in writing better and more comprehensive constitution for Myanmar.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker then expressed his special thanks to them for the warm welcome and said amidst the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw session which is of great importance to Myanmar, they came there to promote China-Myanmar bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership with much consideration to the invitation of the congress chairman. It is believed that sharing of operational experiences and ideas by the NPC would be greatly beneficial to the Hluttaws. It is pleased to China’s consideration for territorial integrity and sovereignty of Myanmar. Myanmar would continue supporting One China Policy. Myanmar is always pleased to see the healthy development of China. That seeking the decision from the National People’s Congress on signing foreign investment contract in China is a point to learn and copy. It is undeniable that the rapid growth of China is thanks to the contribution of the congress in such important fields as management, legislation and monitoring. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker then expressed his strong wish to promote bilateral cooperation between the two parliaments. After the meeting, the vice chairman of the National People’s Congress hosted luncheon to the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and delegation members at Qin Yuan Hall of the convention centre.—MNA

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker arrives back from China

Yangon, 26 Feb—Myanmar delegation led by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann arrived here at 1.35 pm today after wrapping up the goodwill visit in China at the invitation of Chinese National People’s Congress Chairman Mr Wu Bangguo.

They were welcomed back a Yangon International Airport by Deputy Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw U Nanda Kyaw Swa, Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe, Chairman of Pyithu Hluttaw Public Accounts Committee U Thurein Zaw, Deputy Speaker of Yangon Region Hluttaw U Tin Aung, Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar Mr Li Junhua and officials.

A total of 18 members accompanied the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker.—MNA

Delegation led by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann being welcomed back by officials at Yangon International Airport.—MNA
Arrangements are necessary...

(from page 16)

member of Political Committee of Central Committee of Communist Party this morning. The PRC has been able to keep its economic development and peace and stability though its area is very large and its population is over 1.3 million with 56 national races, which is largely attributable to the effective and subtle leadership of the Communist Party, and this being the case, a long discussion was held to learn those experiences, he added.

He went to say that Myanmar thanked China as the latter had stood by the former, saying that owing to the fact Myanmar has emerged as the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. And he was happy with the support of two Myanmar’s marching to path chosen by the people.

Mr Wu Bangguo said in China’s respect on Myanmar’s territorial integrity. Myanmar had constantly supported the One China Policy. Myanmar and China are like in China in Tibet, Taiwan and Xinjiang regions affairs. He then repeated the Myanmar’s support for peaceful development plan of China.

He said he believed that the development of China would benefit Myanmar for its advancement. He added that he assumed that it was needed to set up detailed plans to promote comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Myanmar. He then invited the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker to share his ideas and suggestions for fostering the bilateral relations.

Next, Mr Wu Bangguo in his speech said that China had maintained deployment and delegation of views with Chinese contributed to mutual trust. The relations between the two nations dated back over 2000 years and Chinese people already had affection for Myanmar people. He said he paid a visit to Myanmar in 1997 during which he could feel the friendliness of Myanmar people. He then expressed his pleasure of seeing Myanmar enjoying development in a few years.

The move towards comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations was indeed turning a new chapter. The relationship between China and Myanmar was both a mutual trust. The two neighbours were cooperating not only in economic and trade but in regional and international area.

Moreover, the leaders of the two countries wished deepened relationship. For this, the first and foremost requirement was exchange relationship. For this, the first and two countries wished deepened cooperation not only in economic and trade but in regional and international area.

He said the relationship between the two countries dated back to the 1980s. The bilateral ties could be further strengthened by promoting cooperation between the Union Solidarity and Development Party from Myanmar and Communist Party of China including signing of MoU on going projects. Mutual exchange and studies could be done between the parties. The communication between the parties and parties of the two countries was an important element for comprehensive strategic partnership.

Moreover, it is need to promote economic and commercial ties further between the two countries, said he adding that in his capacity as the Vice Premier, he took the helm of economic affairs and visited Myanmar in 1997 to observe potentials for economic cooperation between the two countries. Myanmar held a geographically important position and was rich in natural resources. However, the western powers had imposed sanctions against Myanmar since 1988. Nevertheless, the economic ties and trade activities between China and Myanmar maintained steady increase. Now, China was the biggest trade partner of Myanmar and the two nations had been expanding the area of trade activities. Economic cooperation could strengthen the bilateral relations.

He said he assumed that the suspension of Myitsone Dam was the result of the external influences, expressing his belief to reach a settlement through negotiation. China had also constructed mega dams like Three Gorges which had greatly benefited the nation.

The Speaker pointed out that economic cooperation between the two countries would greatly benefit the two countries. Arrangements are necessary for the leaders of the two countries so as to further strengthen the bilateral ties. It is also required to promote cooperation between the Union Solidarity and Development Party of Myanmar and China Communist Party and between the two congresses. In addition, exchange visits between the MPs of the two congresses are needed.

Mr Wu Bangguo said that he would like to receive China’s assistance to improve science and technology. In the social and political fields, Myanmar would like to receive China’s assistance to receive the Buddha tooth relic for the country for public obeisance. Myanmar people are very devoted to Buddha. Myanmar expressed its deepest thanks to China for conveying the Buddha tooth relic to the country for public obeisance. Myanmar wishes to see more cultural visits, more exchange visits in the cultural sector and values China’s active cooperation in ASEAN-3 framework.

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann continued that in the bilateral economic cooperation Myanmar and China need to act taking lesson from the Myanmar issue. The ongoing projects such as oil and gas pipelines, Kyaukpyu deep seaport and motor roads and railroads will greatly benefit the two nations. And these moves are requirements for long-lasting cooperation and amity between the two peoples.

Moreover, there is cooperation in the framework of ASEAN+3 cooperation. Myanmar is due to take ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014. China wishes to strengthened Sino-Myanmar relations within the ASEAN framework. When it comes to the mutual interest, Myanmar and China have supported each other. China values the support of Myanmar in the Taiwan, Tibet and Xinjiang issues. Thus, the bilateral ties will be improved more and it is hoped that the current visit will promote bilateral cooperation between the two congresses, said Mr Wu Bangguo.

In response, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker said he expressed his hope that the two congresses will continue to try to build up a peaceful, modern and developed democratic nation with the main aim of serving the interests of the nation and the people. Recently, Western countries have made many visits to Myanmar. Among them, he also received the guests from those countries, said the Speaker. In receiving US State Secretary Hilary Clinton, the Myanmar side said that the country wanted to normalize the relations with the US but did not accept any policy, plan and move from any nation or organization that are designed to harm the interests of the Myanmar people.

Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann went on to say that he expressed his thanks to China for demanding the lifting of economic sanctions against Myanmar. No matter how the Western countries tried to approach Myanmar, any action harming the cooperation with China would not be acceptable. Myanmar will continue to highlight the multilateral strategic cooperation between the two countries. Then, the Speaker said he wished to invite the Chairman to visit Myanmar at an opportune time. And the visit will further cement the bilateral ties, he concluded.

Mr Wu Bangguo said that he agreed on the promoting of bilateral cooperation between the two congresses. China respects Myanmar’s path to development and supports its choice of policy suitable to the prevailing objective conditions. As far as China is concerned, the Western countries have taken greater interest in Myanmar. But, he said he is delighted by the fact that Myanmar will not try to harm the cooperation with China in normalizing the relations with those Western countries. Good international relations and open economy of Myanmar are indeed essential requirements for economic development, noted Mr Wu Bangguo. China has enjoyed fruits of economic development due to the creation of sound international environment. With economic development, rights and privileges of own countries can be protected. Western countries know that China will not accept any act harming its own interest in dealing with them. Integrity and sovereignty must be respected in the arena of international relations, concluded Mr Wu Bangguo.

Then, Mr Wu Bangguo hosted a dinner of the Myanmar delegation at the West Hall of the People’s Hall. During the dinner, Chinese artists performed dances and songs. The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and the National People’s Congress Chairman exchanged mementos. Later, the Speaker greeted and presented souvenirs to the artists.

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann shaking hands with Chairman of National People’s Congress of China Mr Wu Bangguo.—MNA
Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann arrives in Beijing, PRC, on goodwill visit

Nav Pyi Taw, 26 Feb — A Myanmar delegation comprising 11 Pyithu Hluttaw representatives led by Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann left Yangon by air at 2:15pm on 23 February to pay a goodwill visit to the People’s Republic of China at the invitation of National People’s Congress Chairman Mr Wu Bangguo and arrived at Kunming International Airport in Yunnan Province at 6pm local time.

The Myanmar delegation was welcomed there by Director General of Foreign Affairs Department of Yunnan Province Ms Zhou Hong, Head of Political Affairs Department of Yunnan Province People’s Congress Mr Yang Run Xin and Counsel General U Zaw Phyio Win of Myanmar Counsel General’s Office.

The Myanmar delegation headed by the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and Director General Ms Zhou Hong met at the special lounge of the airport and they discussed matters related to the formations, duties and work programmes of the Myanmar Hluttaw and Yunnan People’s Congress.

Next, the Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and delegation members left by air and arrived at Beijing International Capital Airport at 10:45 pm. The delegation was welcomed there by Deputy Secretary General of National People’s Congress Mr Cao Wei Zhou and Myanmar Ambassador to PRC U Tin Oo and officials.

The Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker and the deputy director general greeted each other at the special lounge of the airport.

Then, the Speaker and delegation members went in a motorcade to Grand Hotel Beijing where they would stay.—MNA

Nav Pyi Taw, 26 Feb — A Myanmar delegation comprised of economic ministers from ASEAN countries led by ASEAN Secretary-General, representatives from embassies of ASEAN nations in Myanmar and officials of the ASEAN Secretariat.

Cambodian Commerce Minister Mr Cham Prasidh chaired the meeting and the participants cordially discussed challenges and weaknesses for forming a ASEAN economic community by 2015 and exchanged views on tasks which would be completed by 2012.

During the meeting, they also discussed matters related to cooperation between ASEAN nations to become a ASEAN economic community and timely completion of trade, services, investment and private sectors and more cooperation between the countries, promoting cooperation between ASEAN and its dialogue partners and matters related to implementation of the ASEAN framework for economic cooperation in the region.

ASEAN’s economic officials also held a preliminary meeting on 24 Feb and yesterday here. During the meeting, the exchanged views on cooperation between the ASEAN countries and progress of the cooperation between ASEAN and its dialogue partners.

MNA

Union-level peace-making group...

(from page 16)

The agreement is as follow:

(a) Ceasefire by both sides;
(b) Formation of Union-level peace-making group and delegation for dialogue officially and negotiation of date, time and venue for talk.
(c) Opening of communication office (with no arms) at an appropriate site agreed by both sides.
(d) Negotiation will be made for holding arms beyond the areas agreed by both sides.
(e) Settlement at the sites agreed by both sides.

The Union-level peace-making group and NMSP peace-making group signed four-fact Union-level peace agreement. The agreement is as follow:

(a) To observe ceasefire far and wide the nation, especially to end up armed conflicts causing in areas of national races.
(b) To start political dialogue within at most 45 days of ceasefire.
(c) Allowing participation of contributors as observers.
(d) To start political dialogue between representatives of armed national races organizations and representatives of the government after ceasefire of all armed national races organizations. In case ceasefire is not secured with all the organizations till December 2012, to start the political dialogue between representatives of the ceasefire organizations and representatives of the government.
(e) To continue talks on national reconciliation, based on political compromises with participation of representatives of domestic national political parties and democratic forces.
(f) To initiate procedures for prompt implementation of agreement reached in the abovementioned dialogue.
(g) To work for stability and development of education, health and social sectors of the region in coordination with respective national races armed organizations and the government as the ceasefire comes into effect.

General clauses:

1. In periods of ceasefire and political dialogue,
(a) To have the right to communicate with the public and help each other.
(b) To have the right to communicate with domestic political parties.
(c) To have the right to communicate with news agencies and media. To inform the public of outcomes of political dialogue as required.
(d) To conduct negotiation in advance in communicating with the foreign diplomats.
(e) To release all political prisoners remaining in the prisons and to free comrades of New Mon State Party in prisons with sympathy as well.
(f) To avoid forced labour by both sides, apart from volunteers. To seek solution for cases of people’s lands through coordination.

Remark: If there is any other fact in addition to 10 above-mentioned clauses, they will be put forward.)

Col Huy Myint Aung and U Nai Talanyi exchanged state-level initial peace agreement. Union Minister U Aung Min and U Nai Rawsa exchanged four-fact Union-level peace agreement. They posed for documentary photos.

MNA

ASEAN Economic Ministers’ 18th informal meeting held

ASEAN Economic Ministers and Secretary-General pose for documentary photo at 18th informal meeting.—MNA

Union minister visits swine farm in Lashio

Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann meets Deputy Secretary General of National People’s Congress of China Mr Cao Wei Zhao at special anteroom in Beijing Airport.—MNA

MNA

MNA

MNA
YANGON, 26 Feb—A ceremony to kick off the 17th Annual Golf Tournament of City Golf Resort members of Yangon City Development Committee was held at Ngwe Thawda Golf Course of City Golf Resort on Thiri Mingala Road in Insein Township at 6.30 am on 19 February. The opening ceremony was attended by Yangon Region Chief Minister U Myint Swe. At first, Yangon Mayor Yangon Region Minister for Development Affairs U Hla Myint and Patron of the City Golf Resort U Ko Lay tasted coffee on the practice balls to open the golf tournament. After that, members of the City Golf Resort participated in the golf tournament at Ngwe Thawda Golf Course and Myakanta Golf Course. The prize presentation ceremony was held in front of the House of Ngwe Thawda Golf Course. Mayor U Hla Myint, Secretary of YCDDC, U Kyaw Soe, Joint Secretary U Tin Tun and YCDC members awarded first, second and third winners in the guests’ event, diplomatics’ event, foreigners’ event, ordinary (open), ordinary (special), company member events and international events, winners of longest drive, nearest pin, most par, most birdie, first, second and third prize winners in women’s event, winners of most par and most birdie in the tourney. Next, General Manager U Saw Lin of the golf resort expressed thanks for contributor’s participation to successfully hold the golf tournament on a grand scale. A total of 319 members took part in the golf tournament—MNA

Myanmar snooker team leave for Thailand to take part in snooker cup

THAILAND from 21 to 26 February. They were seen off at Yangon International Airport by President of MBSF U Tin Maung Win and executives. Selected snooker Win Khai Min Aye secured one bronze medal in the double event and the singles event in the XXVI South-East Asian Games held in the Republic of Indonesia. As a result, he was invited to take part in the Thai invitational snooker cup. The first prize winner will bag 100,000 baht and the second 50,000 baht. All the players in the semifinals will be awarded 30,000 baht each. Cash awards will be given to winners up to the 48th position. Moreover, the cup will present 15,000 baht as the highest break prize to the winner—MNA

Tennis Course for Basic and Intermediate Level wraps up

YANGON, 26 Feb—The Tennis Course for Basic and Intermediate Level concluded at Theinbyu Tennis Court in Mingala Taungnyunt Township on 17 February. On behalf of the President of Myanmar Tennis Federation, General Secretary U Lay Naing spoke on the occasion, saying that the coaches must have capability to train the new generation tennis players to understand basic tennis techniques, and the trainers must be keen to study the tennis techniques. He continued to say that if the trainees have lack of basic tennis techniques in tennis events, the player will not achieve success in the competition and will not be chosen as a selected player. Those who take perfect exercises with basic technique and skills will bring honour to the State, he said. That is why he said that the tennis coaches who completed in the training course are to hand out new generation tennis players who will bring victory to the State. Next, Chief Coach of Myanmar Tennis Federation Mr Robert David also spoke on the occasion and explained facts about tennis techniques of event. Later, U Maung Maung Lay (JTI Coordinator) and Executive U Tin Htoo from Myanmar Tennis Federation presented completion certificates to the trainees individually.

Hamane Making Contest held

PETHIN, 23 Feb—At the Buddha Pujanija of Aung Htoo aungpya Pagoda in Ye Kyin Po Thaw Zin Road in Mayangon Township, experienced coaches U Chan Han and U Ko Ko Lay and assistant coaches from HAN Golf Masters Academy will provide systematic lecture and training to the trainees. The training course will last 10 days. Those who are enthusiastic wishing to attend the golf training course may enlist at the training range, not later than 26 February. For further information, golf enthusiasts may dial 01-651797, 651374 and 09-2037671 of the training range—Kyemon

Winners awarded in international and traditional chess tournament

NAY PYI TAW, 23 Feb—Mon State Chess Subcomittee and Mawlamyine Chess Club jointly organized the second International and Myanmar Traditional Chess Tournament at MCA Halal. The Chess Club on Strand Road in Mawlamyine on 12 February. The tournament lasted four days from 9 to 12 February. The tournament was categorized as men’s (open), international, junior U-18 event and women’s Myanmar traditional chess open event. On behalf of the Chairman of Mon State Chess Subcomittee, Chairman of the Club U Aung Myan, Vice-Chairman Dr Than Lwin, Secretary U Min Lwin and executive awarded Ma Nyein July Oo who stood first in the international chess junior event. Muung Aung Min Khant who secured the first position in the Myanmar traditional chess contest and other winners. It was learnt that the chess club will hold one more chess contest in honour of the 67th Anniversary Armed Forces Day which falls on 27 March.—Myanmar Alin

Best opportunity for golf enthusiasts to attend training course on 27 February

YANGON, 26 Feb—I AN Golf Masters Academy will open the basic golf training course on 27 February at Myanmar Golf Training Range on Kyauk Yadwin Road in Mayangon Township. The academy will bring in the best coaches and permit the trainees to get maximum results and progress. For further information, golf enthusiasts may dial 01-651797, 651374 and 09-2037671 of the training range. Those who are enthusiastic wishing to attend the golf training course may enlist at the training range, not later than 26 February. For further information, golf enthusiasts may dial 01-651797, 651374 and 09-2037671 of the training range—Kyonor

Myanmar youth team under training to compete in Brunei King’s Cup

YANGON, 26 Feb—The Brunei King’s Cup Football Tournament 2012 will be organized by Brunei Football Association from 24 February to 9 March. The Myanmar youth team is under training at the camp beginning 21 February. Despite starting training term on 17 January, the Myanmar youth team took exercise once a week due to playing the Myanmar National League matches. As preparations for the cup, Myanmar youth team played tune-up matches with University Team. After coming out one win and one draw results, the final 18 caps were selected for Myanmar selected youth team. At present, the team is under training of Korean Chief Coach. In the cup, Myanmar is included in the group together with Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippine and Laos. The group (B) comprises Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, Timor, Cambodia and host Brunei. Myanmar will play against the Philippines in the debut on 24 February. The Myanmar youth team is constituted with Manager U Soe Moe, Chief Coach Pak Seong Hua, Assistant Coaches U Tin Myint Aung, U Aung Aung Tun and Mr Halay John, Goal Coach U Myo Chit, goalkeeper Pyae Aung (Southern), Myo Min Lat (Zeya Shwemyaw), defenders Yann Aung Aung (Yangon), Ye Zaw Htet Aung (Yadanabon), Nyo Nyi Aung (Htanwadyaw), Zaw Min Tun, Nanda Kyaw (Magway), midfielders Then Tha Win, Kyaw Zeya (Kandawgaw), Naing Lin Oo (Ayeawadyaw), Zaw Lin, Pyae Phyo Oo (Nay Pyi Taw), Kyi Lin, David Dan (Yangon), forwards Kyaw Ko Ko (Zeya Shwemyaw), Mai Aik Naing (Kandawgaw), Thet Naing (Yadanabon) and Kaung Sithu (Yangon).—Po Thaw Zin

Hamane Making Contest held

PETHIN, 23 Feb—At the Buddha Pujanija of Aung Htoo aungpya Pagoda in Ye Kyin Po Thaw Zin Road in Mayangon Township, experienced coaches U Chan Han and U Ko Ko Lay and assistant coaches from HAN Golf Masters Academy will provide systematic lecture and training to the trainees. The training course will last 10 days. Those who are enthusiastic wishing to attend the golf training course may enlist at the training range, not later than 26 February. For further information, golf enthusiasts may dial 01-651797, 651374 and 09-2037671 of the training range. Those who take perfect exercises with basic technique and skills will bring honour to the State, he said. That is why he said that the tennis coaches who completed in the training course are to hand out new generation tennis players who will bring victory to the State. Next, Chief Coach of Myanmar Tennis Federation Mr Robert David also spoke on the occasion and explained facts about tennis techniques of event. Later, U Maung Maung Lay (JTI Coordinator) and Executive U Tin Htoo from Myanmar Tennis Federation presented completion certificates to the trainees individually.
World’s first quadruple limb transplant operation over in

ANKARA, 26 Feb—The world’s first quadruple limb transplant operation came to an end on Saturday at Hacettepe University in Turkey’s capital Ankara, the country’s semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. The operation, which began on Friday morning, transplanted two arms and two legs of a deceased donor to a patient, Dr Murat Tuncer said, adding that the quadruple limb transplant is over and the donor to a patient, Dr Murat Tuncer was quoted as saying.

“...”

Cold front to sweep south

BEIJING, 26 Feb—A cold front will hit China’s southern regions over the coming three days, dragging down temperatures, meteorological authorities said on Sunday.

The cold front will drop temperatures by three to six degrees Celsius in the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River and regions south of the river from 26 to 28 February, according to the National Meteorological Centre.

Meanwhile, cloudy and rainy weather will continue to affect regions along the Yangtze and Huai rivers during the period, the center said.

Parts of Guizhou Province in southwest China will see icy rains, it added.

The centre also forecast light and moderate snow in parts of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, eastern parts of northwest China, central and northern parts of northeast China, as well as northern parts of south China during the same period.

Heavy snow will sweep eastern parts of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau during the period, the centre noted.

Nelson Mandela likely to leave hospital by Monday

BEIJING, 26 Feb—Former South African President Nelson Mandela is in stable condition and comfortable at a hospital after undergoing a “diagnostic procedure” for abdominal pain on Saturday. He is expected to be discharged by Monday.

A family member of Mandela’s says he is doing fine after hernia surgery. Mandela was admitted to hospital for treatment for a “long-standing abdominal complaint”.

Known to be in frail condition, Mandela spent several days at Johannesburg’s Milpark Hospital just over a year ago with respiratory problems. He became South Africa’s first black president in 1994, after spending 27 years in prison for his fight against the nation’s racist apartheid rule. Mandela was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Indian Air Force officials collect samples near the wreckage of a Mirage fighter near Bhand, around 562 kms away from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India, on 24 Feb, 2012. An Indian Air Force Mirage fighter crashed on Friday in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, but its pilot ejected to safety, said local TV channel Times Now.

Romney backers warned of long fight

MITT ROMNEY

LANSing, 26 Feb—Mitt Romney campaigned hard Saturday in Michigan, focusing on both President Obama and his leading Republican challenger, Rick Santorum.

Tuesday’s Michigan primary is an important one for Romney, who was born in the state. But his staff warned financial contributors that even if Romney wins Michigan on Tuesday, the fight for the nomination may continue for weeks, The New York Times reported.

Speaking to Ingham County Republicans at a Lincoln Day breakfast in Lansing, Romney barely mentioned Santorum, The Detroit News reported. Instead, the former Massachusetts governor promised to be a tax-cutter.

“I’m going to do it by getting us more good jobs, by getting us less debt and by getting government a heck of a lot smaller and freeing the American people to pursue their dreams,” Romney said.

It was a different story in Troy, where both Santorum and Romney addressed Americans for Prosperity. Santorum attacked Romney, and Romney returned the favor a couple of hours later, calling the former Pennsylvania senator a Washington insider, the Times said.

Romney went after Santorum’s support of former US Sen. Arlen Specter, a moderate Republican who later switched to the Democratic Party.

“This taking one for the team, that’s business as usual in Washington,” Romney said. “We have to have principled, conservative leadership, and I have demonstrated that through my life.”

Pirate attack foiled by

IRANIAN NAVY

TIBERIA, 26 Feb—Iranian naval forces foiled a pirate attack on an oil tanker Saturday near the Gulf of Aden, officials say. Six Somali pirate speedboats attacked the oil tanker 35 miles north of the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, which connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. A swift retaliation by naval forces caused pirates to flee the scene.

Iran’s Revolutionary Guard reported. Since November 2008, the Iranian navy has conducted patrols in the Gulf of Aden on the lookout for pirates, after the cargo ship MF Delight was hijacked off the coast of Yemen.

Magnitude 6.8 earthquake hits Russia’s Siberia

WASHINGTON MOSCOW, 26 Feb—An earthquake measuring 6.8 on the Richter scale jolted Russia’s southwestern Siberia on Sunday, the US Geological Survey said.

So far, there are reports about possible casualties and destruction in the region.

The epicentre, with a depth of 11.7km, was initially determined to be at 51.7314 degrees north latitude and 95.9207 degrees east longitude. According to Russian media, the quake lasted for 4 to 5 minutes and was widely felt in the region.

Russia’s Emergency Situations Ministry is trying to reach its regional branches to verify the situation, the reports said.

Indian Air Force officials collect samples near the wreckage of a Mirage fighter near Bhand, around 562 kms away from Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India, on 24 Feb, 2012. An Indian Air Force Mirage fighter crashed on Friday in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, but its pilot ejected to safety, said local TV channel Times Now.
**Whitney Houston’s grave site ‘protected by armed guards’**

**NEW YORK, 26 Feb—** Whitney Houston’s burial site is reportedly being protected by armed guards amid fears that grave robbers would be after jewellery and gold-lined coffin.

The singer, who died in her LA hotel on 11 February, was draped in a purple gown and earrings and a pair of glittering gold slippers.

The gold casket and jewels have set off alarms that grave robbers may want to steal the booty.

“The is a very genuine fear that her coffin will be targeted by grave robbers,” the New York Post quoted a source as telling Britain’s Daily Star. It would be hard for them to actually dig her up.

**Meryl Streep wants Viola Davis to win Oscar**

**LONDON, 26 Feb—** Actress Meryl Streep, who has been nominated in the best actress category for the Oscars, says she wants her friend Viola Davis to win the prestigious trophy.

“Yes, oh yes! I love her and think she’s amazing. She deserves and should be at the forefront of our business. She’s a friend and we’ve worked together and I’m really fond of her. So we want the best for our friends. Honestly,” thees.co.uk quoted her as saying. While Streep is nominated for her portrayal of Margaret Thatcher in The Iron Lady, Davis has been nominated for role in The Help. Streep and Davis have previously appeared together in 2008 film Doubt.

**Oprah Winfrey lists NYC pad for $7.9m**

**WASHINGTON, 26 Feb—** After having given up her talk show last year, Oprah Winfrey is reportedly looking at some prime real estate as well. According to Zillow, the 58-year-old TV personality is putting with the posh Manhattan penthouse apartment she purchased in 2008 for $7.1 million dollars, which is now in the market for 7.9 million dollars.

Winfrey’s BFF Gayle King once reportedly lived in the 2,530-square-foot property, at Midtown Manhattan’s Place 57, which features three bedrooms, three-and-a-half bathrooms and is surrounded by floor-to-ceiling glass windows, Us weekly magazine reported.

The pad also has a wrap-around terrace with breathtaking city views.

The 36th floor spread has 12-foot high ceilings and a “triangle-shaped” living room, a “state-of-the-art” kitchen and a high-end dining area. The master suite features three walk-in closets and a spa-style tub.

**Passport problem strands family in Dallas**

A Denver family bound for a vacation in Belize said they wound up stranded in Dallas when officials refused to accept one of their passports. Kyle Gosnell said he was traveling to Belize during the weekend for a planned weeklong getaway with his wife Dana and their young son Kyle Jr, and their passports were all thoroughly checked before leaving Denver International Airport, KOAT-TV reported.

However, Gosnell said an American Airlines official studied his passport while they were changing planes in Dallas and told him the document would not be accepted because it was “invalid.” He said his passport has a small crease on the back cover and is overall worn.

**Olney wins annual pancake competition**

Kaela Krueger led a field of 15 runners in the annual pancake race marking Shrove Tuesday. The winner, a 41-year-old in 68.6 seconds, took a fall 10 seconds longer than the winning runner in Olney, England, against whom Liberal has been competing for decades. The Northampton Chronicle & Echo reported Devon Byrne, 18, set a record pace, covering the distance in Olney in 58.5 seconds and besting 22 competitors to win the international title.

“It’s crazy here today,” JoAnn Combs, one of the race’s organizers, told UPI. Patti Rutledge came in second and Leslie Spikes, third. Though they didn’t win, members of Amanda Schwab’s family set a record of their own. Schwab and her four daughters competed, the first time five members of a single family have taken part.

**Michelle Williams named ‘honorary Irishwoman’**

**WASHINGTON, 26 Feb—** Michelle Williams has become the first “honorary Irishwoman” to win an Oscar. Wilde award for her role in My Week With Marilyn. The ceremony was held in the US Embassy in London.

The singer, who died in her LA hotel on 11 February, was draped in a purple gown and earrings and a pair of glittering gold slippers.

The gold casket and jewels have set off alarms that grave robbers may want to steal the booty.

“There is a very genuine fear that her coffin will be targeted by grave robbers,” the New York Post quoted a source as telling Britain’s Daily Star. It would be hard for them to actually dig her up.

**Lady Gaga ‘scolded’ by dad for flipping middle finger at photographers**

**WASHINGTON, 26 Feb—** Lady Gaga has revealed that her father, Joseph Germanotta, scolded her for making a rude gesture at a baseball match after she stuck her middle finger up at photographers. The 25-year-old singer was watching the New York Mets in 2010 when the incident took place. “It was the first time in nearly two years that I was scolded by my father — partly for misbehaving in public and partly for attending a Mets game,” Contactmusic quoted Logan as telling Moviest刎ews.

Williams said she was “honoured” to receive the prize. “This is an award from a people who are known for whopping, for literature and lore, for myth and legend and in a business that’s ultimately about storytelling, I’m honoured to be acknowledged by the original storytellers,” Williams said.

**Oprah Winfrey**

**WASHINGTON, 26 Feb—** After having given up her talk show last year, Oprah Winfrey is apparently unloading some prime real estate as well. According to Zillow, the 58-year-old TV personality is putting with the posh Manhattan penthouse apartment she purchased in 2008 for $7.1 million dollars, which is now in the market for 7.9 million dollars.

Winfrey’s BFF Gayle King once reportedly lived in the 2,530-square-foot property, at Midtown Manhattan’s Place 57, which features three bedrooms, three-and-a-half bathrooms and is surrounded by floor-to-ceiling glass windows, Us weekly magazine reported.

The pad also has a wrap-around terrace with breathtaking city views.

The 36th floor spread has 12-foot high ceilings and a “triangle-shaped” living room, a “state-of-the-art” kitchen and a high-end dining area. The master suite features three walk-in closets and a spa-style tub.

**Chandra Bahadar Dangis, a Nepali who claims to be the world’s shortest man holds his citizenship card in Dang district in Nepal’s Kathmandu. Dangis is preparing on Sunday to be measured by Guinness World Records experts investigating his claim to be the shortest man ever recorded.**

**Chandra Bahadar Dangis, a Nepali who claims to be the world’s shortest man holds his citizenship card in Dang district in Nepal’s Kathmandu. Dangis is preparing on Sunday to be measured by Guinness World Records experts investigating his claim to be the shortest man ever recorded.**
Giggs salvages United win as Arsenal thump Spurs

SPOKESMAN

United went ahead with a seventh-minute header from Paul Scholes but Grant Holt levelled seven minutes from time before Giggs had the last laugh to keep the champions two points behind leaders Manchester City, who beat Blackburn Rovers on Saturday.

Levante beat Espanyol in crucial Euro boost

Corinna, 26 Feb — Marco Ruben grabbed a last-minute winner to earn Levante a 2-1 win at Espanyol on Saturday to boost their hopes of a place in the Champions League. The win puts the team from Valencia back into fourth position on 35 points. Former Espanyol player Valdo was the quickest to react to a loose ball to finish well on 24 minutes and give Levante the lead.

In the second-half, Espanyol pressed for the leveller with Slovakian winger Vladimir Weiss, on loan from Manchester City, looking particularly dangerous. However it was Arouna Kone, who nearly doubled the lead minutes later substitute Kalu only to be denied by a fine save by goalkeeper Gustavo Adolfo Munua Vera.

However, Ruben struck a last minute free-kick that took advantage to take the three points away for Levante. It was the first win in nine league games for a Levante side who started the campaign brightly and briefly challenged Real Madrid and Barcelona at the top of the table. Malaga came from behind to beat bottom club Real Zaragoza 5-1, for whom Carlos Aranda grabbed an early lead, to move into fifth place, one point behind Levante.
Cardiff pay penalty as Liverpool end trophy wait

LONDON, 26 Feb — Liverpool ended their six-year trophy drought after winning a penalty shoot-out victory over Championship side Cardiff in the League Cup final at Wembley.

The Merseysiders just about held their nerve in an error-strewn penalty decider, prevailing 3-2 after the two sides had finished levelled at 2-2 after a thrilling period of extra-time. The Premier League club’s shoot-out victory was clinched when a Cardiff substitute Anthony Gerrard — cousin of Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard — shot wide with Cardiff’s fifth and final spot-kick.

The Cardiff player’s miss came after Liverpool had seen Steven Gerrard’s spot-kick saved and Charlie Adam’s second blazed over the bar. But Cardiff misses from Kenny Miller, Ryan Giggs and former Ipswich Town striker David McGoldrick ultimately doesn’t count.

The win was Liverpool’s first trophy since their FA Cup triumph in 2006, and the first since Kop legend Kenny Dalglish returned as manager last year. The title triumph ends a two-year wait for trophies after a dramatic period of extra-time which saw Cardiff snatch a 2-2 draw with a leveller from centre-half Ben Turner with just two minutes remaining. — Internet

Goal that never was could decide Serie A title

MILAN, 26 Feb — This season’s Serie A title race could ultimately be decided by the goal that never was during Saturday’s top-of-the-table clash between AC Milan and Juventus. AC Milan’s Sulley Muntari was already celebrating after heading the ball over the line, oblivious to the fact that officials had waved play on even though replays showed the ball had crossed the line. Had the goal counted, AC Milan would have gone 2-0 ahead at a point where they were dominating the game and there might well have been no way back for a ragged Juventus.

Instead, Juve regrouped to force a 1-1 draw and in doing so provided another boost for the case in favour of goal-line technology, currently being tested by soccer’s governing body FIFA. Juventus stayed one point behind Serie A leaders Milan with a game in hand, whereas a defeat would have left them four points adrift with the psychological blow of having lost their unbeaten record this season. AC Milan coach Massimiliano Allegri was typically philosophical about the incident.

“The best thing would be to not talk and to stay quiet, divesting those couples of minutes from everyone for what they say,” he said. “If it had been 0-0, the game would have been well under control especially as we were on top. “Maybe they painted the goal line too thick,” he added. Players from both sides agreed that the ball was in, including Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon. “I wasn’t aware at the time of my position or Muntari’s shot. Afterwards, I saw in the pictures that the ball had gone in,” he said.

“But must be frank and say that if I had realised, I would not have helped the referee.” Juventus also pointed out that they had a goal harshly disallowed just before their equaliser.

“There were refeereeing mistakes today, one for their goal when the ball went in, and then when we had a goal disallowed for offside,” said coach Antonio Conte. — Internet

AIG profit boosted by tax benefit

NEW YORK, 26 Feb — Insurance giant AIG has reported a big increase in fourth-quarter profit, due to a $17.7bn ($11.2bn) tax benefit. Net profit for the quarter rose to $19.8bn from $11.2bn a year earlier. An accounting decision that the firm is likely to post future profits allowed it to release a “deferred income tax valuation allowance”. In effect it means it will not pay tax on billions of dollars of future income thanks to benefits stemming from losses during the financial crisis. AIG needed a government bailout in 2008 and is still majority-owned by the US government.

“AIG’s chief executive said the company began to prosper again in 2011.” — Internet

Ronaldo’s magical backheel gives Real victory

MADRID, 26 Feb — Cristiano Ronaldo scored a wonderful, backheeled goal to give Real Madrid a 1-0 win over neighbours Rayo Vallecano on Sunday to extend their lead to 13 points over Barcelona at the top of La Liga. The second half was eight minutes old when the Rayo defence failed to clear a corner at the first attempt.

Portuguese superstar Ronaldo, facing away from the goal, then backheeled the ball so powerfully from 15 yards out that it evaded at least four Rayo defenders on its way into the hand corner of the net.

It was his 29th league goal of the season. Barcelona can cut Real’s lead back to 10 points later Sunday when they travel to Atletico Madrid.

Madrid coach Jose Mourinho admitted his team were fortunate to escape with victory. “They had three good chances and deserved to get something from the game,” he said. “I think that is our most difficult win so far this season. We adapted to a difficult pitch, my players gave everything and I’m very happy with result. Rayo did not deserve to lose and I hope they have a great end to the season.” — Internet

Weather forecast for 27th February, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions/States</th>
<th>Maximum Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Minimum Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Forecast Percent Likelihood of Isolated Light Rain or Thundershowers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:30 hr MST on today</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Paritta by Hilly Regions</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. To Be Healthy Exercise</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>3. Nice &amp; Sweet Song</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>4. Health Programme</td>
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<td>60(%)</td>
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<td>5. Song Of National Races</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6. Bubble Bath</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40(%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Fred &amp; Friends</td>
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<td>8. Joey &amp; Joe</td>
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<td>9. University Entrance Examination (History)</td>
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<td>10. Sing &amp; Enjoy</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>60(%)</td>
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<td>11. TV Drama Series</td>
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<td>6</td>
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<td>12. News</td>
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<td>13. World’s Star</td>
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<td>15. India Drama Series</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60(%)</td>
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</table>

Regional weather observations at 0830 hr on the day before yesterday:
- Pattani By Hilly Regions: 21°C (69°F) — 12°C (54°F) — 20(%)
- Fred & Friends: 17°C (63°F) — 6°C (43°F) — 60(%)
- Joey & Joe: 17°C (63°F) — 6°C (43°F) — 60(%) — End of isolated light rain or thundershowers in the eastern Taninthayi (Taninthar Yaw and Thandwe Region).
Arrangements are necessary for the leaders of the two countries so as to further strengthen the bilateral ties

The move towards comprehensive strategic partnership between the two nations was indeed turning a new chapter

Thura U Shwe Mann

Mr Wu Bangguo

Union-level peace-making group and NMSM ink initial peace deal

Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Aung Min from Union-level peace-making group and U Nai Rawsa from NMSM peace-making group exchange four-point agreement.—MNA

Nav Pyi Taw, 26 Feb.—As the government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and China have been pursuing a policy of pursuing peaceful coexistence and mutual development, the two countries have been advancing towards a strategic partnership. The new chapter in the relationship between the two nations was indeed turning a new chapter.

Union Minister for Rail Transportation U Aung Min from Union-level peace-making group and U Nai Rawsa from NMSM peace-making group exchange four-point agreement.—MNA

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